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Karl W. Wilde

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FERTILIZER TESTS ON WHEAT IN SOUTHERN ALBERTA

Several different kinds of fertilizers were tested on wheat grown on various soil types in southern Alberta in the last two years. The test plots were located on fine sandy loam, loam, silt loam, clay loams, and clay in the brown soil zone in south-eastern Alberta, and in the dark brown and shallow (thin) black soil zones in western and central Alberta. The fertilizers used were ammonium phosphate (11-48-0) at rates of 25 to 50 pounds per acre; ammonium sulphate at 27.5 pounds per acre; single superphosphate at 50 pounds per acre; triple superphosphate at 56 pounds per acre and complete fertilizer at 37 pounds per acre. The plots were laid out in quadruplicate and the yields obtained were analysed statistically to determine which results were significant.

In general, it can be stated that the greatest responses occurred in the shallow black soil zone, and in the northern portion of the dark brown soil zone with increases up to 7.8 bushels per acre on the shallow black clay soil at Pincher Creek in 1948. Practically no response was noted on any soil type tested in the brown

soil zone east of Lethbridge with the exception of the heavy soils in the northern part of this area. In the dark brown soil zone greater responses occurred also on the heavier soil types.

Practically without exception, where responses from fertilizer occurred on the dark brown or shallow black soils, the fertilizers used contained phosphate. The use of nitrogenous fertilizers alone showed a decrease in the yields of wheat, and the addition of potash to a phosphatic fertilizer did not give an additional increase. It appears therefore that in many areas of southern Alberta, when rainfall is ample, the supply of available phosphates may be deficient in the soil.

The protein contents were determined on the wheat in these tests where fertilizers were applied at 25 to 56 pounds per acre, but no significant differences were noted. However, no additional test plots on eroded soils, in the dark brown soil zone where ammonium phosphate fertilizer was broadcast in 1948 at excessive 1p heavy rates, after the wheat was up (200 pounds per acre), significant increases occurred both in the yield of wheat and also in its protein content.

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